



**National Park Service**  
**U.S. Department of the Interior**

Bering Land Bridge  
National Preserve

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## **Bering Land Bridge National Preserve News Release**

**Release date: Immediate**

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### **Large Group of Muskox Killed in Recent Storm**

During a routine flight to radio-track collared muskoxen in Bering Land Bridge National Preserve on March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2011, it was discovered that a large group had perished during a flood. Thirty-two animals were found frozen in the ice on the northern coast of the Seward Peninsula, though it is possible that an additional 23 may be buried deeper and not visible until spring. This group, containing four animals that have been fitted with VHF or GPS radio collars, numbered 55 when observed on February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2011. On February 25<sup>th</sup>, a winter storm generated a tidal surge and coastal flooding that rapidly inundated low lying areas. The National Park Service is leading an investigation to document the composition of the group and the parameters of the storm that caused the rapid flooding and mortalities.

The monitoring of the four collared animals is an active component of a five-year study on muskoxen population dynamics in northwest Alaska. The cooperative study is led by Dr. Layne Adams, Research Wildlife Biologist with the U.S. Geological Survey, and Dr. Joel Berger, Senior Scientist for the Wildlife Conservation Society and a professor at the University of Montana.

The National Park Service is working with local communities and researchers who may be in the vicinity of this region to minimize conflicts with other wildlife drawn to the area. It is unlawful to remove horns from national parklands, and likely the meat is neither salvageable nor palatable.

For more information about this event or the muskox research project, contact Jeanette Pomrenke, Superintendent at 907-443-2522 or NPS biologist Marci Johnson at 907-442-8313 or toll-free: 800-471-2352.